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Sunset Beacon

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Eight-Story Complex Planned for Haight and Stanyan

By Thomas K. Pendergast

In an effort to house the homeless, the City is moving forward with plans to build an eight-story, mixed-use building with 160 residential units of affordable housing on the corner of Haight and Stanyan streets.

Some may be familiar with this lot across the street from the Whole Foods Market, as it was previously occupied by a McDonald's restaurant and, more recently, a parking lot.

City documents say the building will be housing for residents earning from 30% to 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI), defined as the midpoint of a given area's income distribution calculated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. In San Francisco, 100% AMI works out to $97,000 annually for a single person, $110,850 for two people, $124,700 for three and $138,550 for four.

The project will include 40 units of subsidized housing to accommodate families and Transitional Age Youth (TAY) exiting homelessness and will feature commercial spaces on the ground floor to serve them and the neighborhood. These spaces will be operated by nonprofits and will include an early childhood education center, drop-in center for TAYs, community technology training center, senior center and an outlet featuring affordable food options, according to plans filed with the SF Planning Department.

The current plan will include 35 studio apartments, 43 one-bedroom, 42 two-bedroom and 40 three-bedroom units.

No on-site parking for motor

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Khalid Zakzouk, 'The Sunset's Banksy'

By Noma Faingold

When 55-year-old artist, Khalid Zakzouk, whose current favorite medium is chalk on sidewalk, was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) many years ago, it was a relief.

There was an explanation why he went from job to job (butcher, construction worker, secretary and gas station attendant, to name a few) while living in Milwaukee for 18 years.

"I wasn't dysfunctional," he said. "I just wasn't satisfied doing just one thing. I used to think I was a broken person. Then I realized I was multifaceted."

Born in Israel, Zakzouk's Palestinian family moved to Saudi Arabia when he was young. He said he was surrounded by desert. The only color he vividly remembers is the neutral hue of sand.

When his father, an artist and educator, returned from

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Khalid Zakzouk creates a chalk image of a dragon, one of dozens of different images he has drawn to delight and inspire his Sunset District neighbors. *Courtesy photo.*

Planning Commission OKs EIR for New Recreation Area at Lake Merced

By Thomas K. Pendergast

With a unanimous vote, the San Francisco Planning Commission approved a final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) aiming to redevelop the old shooting range of the former Pacific Rod and Gun Club at Lake Merced.

According to Planning Department documents, the 11 acres of land between the southwestern part of Lake Merced and John Muir Drive is targeted for a new clubhouse, new boat house and boat storage area, grass sports field, bocce ball lawn, fitness activities, bicycle facilities and rentals, picnic areas and a community garden, a bird watching platform, trails, along with fishing and gardening areas.

There could also be a skate park, full basketball court, playground, community building, terraced patio restaurant and even an arborist facility.

From 1934 to 2015 the land was leased by the gun club, so skeet and trap shooting contaminated the site with lead shot and clay targets. In the Spring of 2016 that was "remediated" by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, although department documents say the additional extraction of residual contamination underneath the former Rifle Range Building is still needed.

Responding to numerous comments from community stakeholders on the design of the Lake Merced West Project, as it is called, the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department requested that the EIR also analyze a variant of the project, which would include a 15,000-square-foot boathouse rather than the 3,000-square-foot boathouse originally planned.

As all other components of

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Learning to Coexist With San Francisco's Coyote Population

By Linda Badger

No one knows exactly how many coyotes are roaming the streets and parks of San Francisco. San Francisco Animal Care and Control estimates that there are approximately 100 coyotes in the City, although the number of sightings would suggest more.

Last year, iNaturalist.org, a wildlife tracking venture between the California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society, recorded approximately 500 "research grade" observations of coyotes in San Francisco, more than half of which were in Golden Gate Park.

For many decades, these California natives were nowhere to be seen in the City. In 2002, however, experts believe coyotes from Marin County somehow crossed the

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Report Sightings to Animal Care & Control
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South Africa
Mesa American Cloud Forest
California Native
Moon Viewing Garden
Succulent Garden
Redwood Grove

A sign in Golden Gate Park's Botanical Garden advises visitors to "Walk. DO NOT RUN" if they encounter a coyote. Coyotes likely present a greater threat to pets than to people. *Photo by Linda Badger.*

Golden Gate Bridge to "recolonize" San Francisco. There is anecdotal evidence that a trapper (illegally) drove coyotes across the bridge and released them in the Presidio. Ever since, coyotes have made themselves at home, thriving in neighborhoods across the City. Amid reports of San Franciscans abandoning the City in droves, this highly intelligent, adaptable native appears to be here to stay, enjoying our many green spaces, rodents, abundant trash offerings and, sadly, sometimes pets.

The California Department of Fish and Game, SF Animal Care and Control, SF Recreation and Park Department and the Presidio Trust have all worked to develop strategies to reduce conflicts between coyotes and humans. Experts stress that coyotes rarely harm humans, with fewer than 20 coyote bites reported across North America annually. By contrast, dog bites reportedly send 1,000 people a day to emergency rooms for treatment.

Coyotes are also beneficial to our ecosystem, eating rats and other rodents that spread disease. Weighing such benefits with the imperative of public safety, city and state officials have developed several strategies to promote peaceful coexistence with urban coyotes, focused on managing human behavior.

First, officials are educating the public to stop feeding coyotes. Aside from being illegal, feeding coyotes causes them to lose their natural fear of people, making it more likely that coyotes will approach us, perhaps aggressively. It is also important that people stop attracting coyotes into their neighborhoods by leaving pet

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Looking Back

Kinen Carvala

Washington Elm

How many different dates has George Washington's birthday been assigned officially?

A marker by the base of an elm tree in Golden Gate Park has the inscription:

Under the parent of this tree, Washington first took command of the American Army, July 3, 1775 Planted by San Francisco Chapter Sons of the American Revolution 1932

The dedication and planting of the elm tree occurred instead on Feb. 22, 1933, with the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), Daughters of the American Revolution and Boy Scouts. Members of The Sons of the American Revolution, which donated the marker, are male descendants of patriots from the American Revolution; the local San Francisco chapter, founded on Oct. 22, 1875, continues to hold monthly meetings. The SAR April 1933 bulletin noted the San Francisco chapter purchased a 12-foot-tall "pedigreed and lineal descendant" of the parent Cambridge elm to plant in Golden Gate Park as described above on George Washington's 201st birthday.

When George Washington was born in Popes Creek Plantation Virginia, his birthday was Feb. 11, 1731, under the Julian calendar used then. The British Calendar Act of 1751 implemented the Gregorian calendar (commissioned by Pope Gregory XIII) in the British Empire, which skipped 11 days between Sept. 2 and 14, 1752. The year's first day changed from March 25 under the "Old Style" dates to Jan. 1 under "New Style." George Washington's date of birth under the Gregorian calendar became Feb. 22, 1732, according to the National Park Service. Julian and Gregorian calendars have different leap-year rules.

In the U.S., the Uniform Monday Holiday Law of 1971 shifted the federal holiday of Washington's Birthday to the third Monday in February, according to historian C. L. Arbelbide, writing in Prologue magazine. Ironically, this holiday never lands on Washington's actual birthday, Feb. 22 on the Gregorian calendar.

While it doesn't look very impressive in the winter, the deciduous elm tree near the Conservatory of Flowers in Golden Gate Park will become a beautiful shade tree in the summer. It is a "pedigreed and lineal descendant" of the elm under which George Washington first took command of the Continental Army. ***Photo by Michael Durand.***

Washington worked as a surveyor from 1749 to 1752, mostly on the frontier of northern Virginia, according to the Founders Online website of the National Archives. He led a diplomatic expedition in the winter of 1753-54 passing along a demand from Virginia's governor for the French to abandon their forts in the Ohio Valley in response to British and French disputes over the area.

During the American Revolution, the Thirteen Colonies' Continental Congress voted in 1775 for Washington to be commander-in-chief of the Continental Army due to his experience in the French and Indian War from 1753 to 1758. Washington, fighting for the British during that war's Battle of the Monongahela, "behaved with extraordinary poise under fire" and managed a British retreat after his commander was shot, according to historian David Preston in Smithsonian Magazine.

The tale and location of Washington taking command in 1775 was associated with a real elm tree in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Though Washington did take command of the Continental Army in July 1775, contemporary diary entries of soldiers include "Nothing remarkable today"— not about any grand ceremonial review of the troops at that parent elm tree. The Cambridge Historical Commission traced the myth of Washington under the elm to a fictitious journal published in 1876 for celebrating the U.S.'s centennial. Historian Fred W. Anderson titled his article "The Hinge of the Revolution: George Washington Confronts a People's Army, July 3, 1775" because he saw Washington taking command as important not because of a mythical elm tree ceremony, but because Washington set out to mold the troops into a Continental Army for the entire emerging American nation rather than a mindset of fighting only for the sake of their familiar local places and residents.

George Washington married widow Martha Dandridge Custis on Jan. 6, 1759, gaining two stepchildren. George Washington never had any biological children. He owned slaves but arranged in his will for them to be freed after his and Martha's deaths, an unusual step for the time, according to J. L. Bell writing for the National Park Service's Northeast Region History Program. (Find an archive of stories covering Controversial Murals at George Washington High School at RichmondSunsetNews.com.)

American independence was declared in 1776. Great Britain recognized the United States as an independent country and formally ended the American Revolution with the Treaty of Paris in 1783. The Constitution of the United States was ratified in 1788.

George Washington was not formally educated, unlike many others in the Continental Congress, i.e., Founding Fathers, according to the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union.

As presiding officer of the Constitutional Convention, George Washington stayed relatively quiet, while delegates debated aspects of government like what kind of executive the U.S. should have, according to the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association. Ten states ratified the Constitution and chose their state's electors to participate in the Electoral College's first presidential election in 1789. Depending on the state, electors were appointed by the state legislature or governor, or by popular vote, according to the Washington Papers website. Each elector voted for two separate people. The person with the most votes became president; the person with the second-most votes became vice president. Though there was no public campaigning done before the election, Washington was considered the likely favorite before the electors' ballots were unsealed and counted, according to Marcus Cunliffe, contributor to History of American Presidential Elections, 1789-2001.

Washington had the most votes, one vote from each elector. John Adams came in second, becoming vice president. George Washington was president of the United States from 1789 to 1797.

The American elm (Ulmus americana) is native to the U.S. Midwest and East Coast. American elm is a long-lived species, often living 175 to 200 years, with some older than 300 years, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The elm is at the northwest corner of JFK Promenade and Conservatory Drive West, the same intersection as Stop #7 of the Golden Gate Park Shuttle, stop name "Conservatory of Flowers."

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Haight St. Housing

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vehicles is included; however, an indoor room for bicycle parking is included with about 30 bike racks.

The building will rise up to 83 feet. Construction is expected to take at least 20 months.

This comes at a time when the City is under pressure from the California state government to build 82,000 units by 2031, a daunting task considering that San Francisco averaged 2,550 units a year over the past two decades, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. The state's mandate would require the City to build more than 10,000 units each year.

Adding to the challenge is the requirement that 46,000 of these units must be affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

Cities that do not meet the state's requirement face cuts in funding for housing and transportation, and could also trigger the state to override local authorities in approving affordable housing projects.

The developers asked for and received permission to construct the building under Senate Bill (SB) 35, which amends the government code to require local government entities to streamline the approval of certain housing projects by skipping the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and removing the need for Conditional Use Authorizations.

An artist's rendering of the mixed-use building proposed for the southeast corner of Haight and Stanyan streets. This image shows the view from the sidewalk on the west side of Stanyan Street looking northeast. *Images courtesy of the SF Planning Department.*

These SB-35 projects must meet certain criteria, including that at least 50% of the proposed residential units must be affordable to households earning up to 80% AMI.

"In order to assure that the affordable units remain so dedicated, they must comply with the San Francisco Inclusionary Affordable Housing Program Procedures Manual with regard to monitoring, enforcement and procedures for eligibility, including the lottery," according to Planning Department documents.

The project's estimated construction cost is $108 million.

But some neighbors oppose the scale of the building, including the Cole Valley Improvement Association (CVIA).

The building was initially proposed for six floors and 120 units but then later bumped up to eight floors and 160 units, to which the CVIA objected.

In their fall 2022 newsletter they referred to previous community meetings when they stated "the numerous meetings having assumed a six-story building on the site, were frivolously wasted on fake issues like color choices and window treatment. The extra two floors were added at the last minute without community approval."

In July CVIA wrote a protest letter to the City.

"Without any previous notice to the public or input from the neighborhood, they announced that the building was going up to eight stories," said the CVIA's letter. "People were shocked and asked how this new plan came about. The answer was that it came from the mayor's office.

"Mayor Breed, the building at six stories covering the entire block across from Golden Gate Park was already too large for the location. Many comments suggested that it looked like an office building or a hospital.

"Now, at eight stories, this project height is totally unacceptable. This location is significant for the City of San Francisco. The corner of Stanyan and Haight is a prominent location and should reflect the best that our city officials, designers and developers can envision," the letter stated.

"Please take this project back to the six story building that was presented to the public during a year of detailed presentations," the letter concluded.

And the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) sent a response.

"The latest adjustments were made to maximize the potential of the site due to overarching concerns about increased construction costs," the MOHCD said. "The design is the result of balancing priorities of community character, strong design, needs of the building's future residents and our City's need to create as much housing as possible.

"There has been a long-standing process for community engagement and moving forward we are more than happy to work with the CVIA … to make sure the decisions behind these design elements are transparently communicated."

Left: The proposed building as it might look from just inside the eastern edge of Golden Gate Park looking southeast. Haight Street is the roadway on the left side of the graphic.

Below: A view of the property before construction. The street in the foreground is Stanyan, Haight Street is to the left, Waller Street is on the right.

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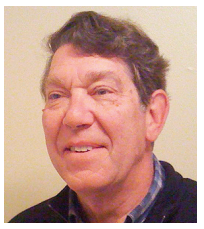
Commentary



Paul Kozakiewicz

What Happened to San Francisco?

San Francisco used to be called "the city that knows how." We put on international expositions and tamed the sand dunes. We had good, smart politicians who worked together for the greater good. We were a destination for fortune hunters, bohemians and entrepreneurs.

What happened?

Now, we can't do anything right.

We've become a mecca for homeless people; there is a mental health crisis on our streets; drug dealers kill a couple of people a day with fentanyl and other dangerous drugs; three members of the School Board had to be recalled because of gross malfeasance; the district attorney had to be recalled because he thought he was still a defense attorney; the SF Municipal Transportation Agency is purposefully making it as difficult as possible to drive a vehicle; the SF Recreation and Park Department does whatever it wants; the FBI's investigation has turned up crime and fraud in numerous city departments; the SF Board of Supervisors is comprised of members who don't have the mental capacity to run a large city; ditto for the accidental mayor, whose biggest accomplishment before taking over a $13 billion city budget was running a community center on Presidio Avenue; labor unions have banned non-union firms from doing some work in the city, leading to fewer firms bidding on city business and significantly driving up city costs (It is no longer OK to pay "prevailing wages," a slap in the face for working people); Laguna Honda Hospital might be forced to shut down; more than half of the city's once flourishing African-American community has left the city (the Hispanic population is declining too); criminals are openly plying their craft without fear of repercussions; businesses are struggling to survive and City Hall is non-responsive and punitive.

I could go on all day. Finding faults with San Francisco today is like shooting fish in a barrel.

So, how did we get here? And how can we make our City work again for everyone?

Politics has a lot to do with it.

San Francisco was a Republican town until the early 1960s. The Republican National Convention was held at the Cow Palace in 1964.

In the '60s, the City's population evolved to become a Democratic Party majority.

Today, 63% of city voters are registered as Democrats.

But within the San Francisco Democratic Party, there have been two factions battling it out for decades – liberal (so-called corporate) Democrats and progressive (so-called socialist) Democrats. It's no surprise that the city's problems have grown significantly with the rise of progressive ideologies, which ride high on ideals, but are not always grounded in reality.

For example, it is easy to pass laws that require every vehicle in California and all appliances in every home to be 100% electric. It's more difficult to create the transmission lines and megawatts of electricity that would be required to power all of these devices, especially in an eco-sensitive manner.

After Mayor Willie Brown beat progressive SF Supervisor Tom Ammiano for mayor in 1996, the progressives started to get organized. Today, a majority of the Board of Supervisors is considered progressive. As well, progressives now dominate many of the City's boards and commissions that make important decisions in city government.

So, how did the progressives become the dominant force in San Francisco Democratic politics?

Seize the DCCC

Progressives took control of the SF Democratic County Central Committee (DCCC), which controls important candidate endorsements and donations. Many Democrats take the DCCC slate card seriously and follow its recommendations.

There is an arcane process where candidates for the DCCC line up a slate of candidates and encourage supporters to vote, usually on a Sunday at a union meeting hall in the Mission District.

Control of this committee was crucial to the building of the Willie Brown and John Burton political machines, and today it is crucial for the progressives to maintain. The process also gives labor and allied non-profits an outsized influence since they turn out their members to vote.

Divide and Conquer

The Democratic Party pushed for district elections about 20 years ago, leading to our small City being divided into 11 districts. The candidates coming out of this process have been less than desirable – in the Sunset District, we got two supervisors who went to prison (Leland Yee and Ed Jew) and in the Richmond District, one supervisor who narrowly escaped a recall attempt (Jake McGoldrick). The quality of candidates running for supervisor has deteriorated exponentially.

Confuse Voters

One of the worst decisions the Democratic Party led us to ranked choice voting. The process is confusing and leads to thousands of San Franciscans' votes being "exhausted," or thrown out.

The recent recall of District Attorney Chesa Boudin is a case in point. After the initial first place votes were counted, Boudin was an afterthought. But after the extra votes were redistributed from the three leading candidates, surprise, Boudin won. About 22,000 votes in the election were "exhausted." It's no wonder he got recalled since he didn't spend time on the west side stumping for votes. He just worked his base and let the magic of numerology take over.

Ranked choice voting is one of the most important tools for socialist Democrats since it allows them to win elections without 50% of the vote. If you can't get a majority at the polls, discard votes from favored candidates until you do.

Eliminate the Competition

Proposition 14 was put on the 2010 statewide ballot by then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenerger, who hoped to open up the primary contest to all voters, regardless of party affiliation. It passed, which now limits only the top two vote getters in the primary election to move on to the general election in November. The CA Democratic Party did little to oppose the proposition.

The proposition favors the largest political parties, the Democrats in urban areas and Republicans in rural areas. Today, it is most likely two Democrats will be on the statewide ballot because of the dominance of Democratic politics in California.

Due to the passage of Prop. 14, political organizations in the state – including the Green, Peace and Freedom and Libertarian parties – were rendered moot after the primary elections and are now struggling to survive.

When it comes to suppressing the vote, Democrats have shown they are just as good as any other party in doing so. With district elections, ranked-choice voting, an open statewide primary election and the progressive takeover of the DCCC, our candidate options are limited at the voting booth and our votes are eliminated in a bizarre voting scheme.

Sliding Down a Rat Hole

With progressives firmly in control, numerous bad decisions have been made in the past two decades, taking us down a route of urban decay and lawlessness.

We've taken the wrong fork in the road on many issues, including the production of housing in the City, the forfeiture of large areas of the City for open drug dealing, the treatment of the mentally ill and the incessant pandering to the political left.

As a lifelong Democrat, I am disappointed in the direction my party has taken in our one-party town. Why is it so difficult to run a town with less than a million people? Why do we make so many bad decisions?

Unfortunately, the rise of progressive politics in San Francisco has a lot to do with it.

We've taken some bad turns, but it's never too late to correct course. We just have to realize our follies and start electing smart politicians who make smart decisions that benefit everyone, and not just pander to a chosen few.

Paul Kozakiewicz is an editor and former publisher of the Richmond Review and Sunset Beacon newspapers.

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Real Estate

John M. Lee

License Needed to Raise Rent

Being a rental property owner in San Francisco gets harder and harder each year. There is a new law that passed in 2020 that requires owners of residential units to get a license before they can increase the rent. This law went into effect for buildings with 10 or more units on July 1, 2022 and will go into effect for all other residential buildings on March 1, 2023 with updates required by every March 1 thereafter.

The City sent out a Notification of 2023 Rent Board Fee and Housing Inventory Requirements in November of 2022 with information on how to fulfill this requirement. Owners or their representatives can log on to portal.sfrb.org to provide the information, or mail in a paper form to do so.

The information they are asking for is how is the unit being used. Is it exclusively owner-occupied? Is it occupied by a "non-owner?" If it is owner-occupied, no other information is required.

If the unit is non-owner occupied, then they ask for the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, approximate square footage, the date the occupancy commenced or vacated, rent paid by the tenants and the utilities included in the rent. It also asks for the contact information in the event that the City needs to contact someone in regard to the building. Lastly, it asks for a business registration number for units with more than five units.

When registering the property, the site asks for the parcel number and a PIN that is included in the notice. If the notice is lost or not received, you can get another PIN by calling 311.

If an owner does not report this information to the Rent Board, there is no financial penalty involved, but then is not eligible to increase the rent. If an owner tries to increase the rent without a license, the tenant can contact to Rent Board and any increases imposed at that time will be disallowed.

So why is the City imposing this housing inventory requirement at this time? They state the reason is because the City does not have an accurate list of all the units that are subject to rent control. In doing this, it will give the Board of Supervisors more data and information to go on so that they can make better decisions on housing and rent control needs.

Also, the Rent Board shall use the information it receives to create a housing inventory that may be used for purposes of inspecting and investigating the level of housing services being provided to tenants, investigating and analyzing rents and vacancies, monitoring compliance with the rent control ordinance, generating reports and surveys, and providing assistance to landlords and tenants and other city departments as needed.

This is the first step in preparing for the vacancy tax that passed as Prop. M in the November 2022 election. Starting on Jan. 1, 2024, property owners with at least three units that have been vacant for more than 182 days will be taxed between $2,500 and $5,000 per empty unit. If the vacancies continue for longer, that penalty can increase to as much as $20,000 per empty unit. The money will go toward subsidizing affordable housing.

Single-family homes and duplexes are exempt from this vacancy tax. The Controller's Office estimates that about 4,000 units are likely to qualify for this vacancy tax. Without a rental inventory it would be difficult for the City to know which units are vacant.

Being a rental-property owner is already difficult in this town. There was a news article this month that the largest apartment owner in San Francisco just defaulted on his loan. With rent increases limited to 60% of CPI, and expenses going up and more and more unfavorable rent control laws for the owners, it is no wonder that many investors have decided to get out of the rental property market altogether.

John M. Lee is a broker with Compass specializing in the Richmond and Sunset districts. If you have any real estate questions, call him at 415-465-0505 or email at johnlee@isellsf.com. Find an archive of John M. Lee's columns at RichmondSunsetNews.com.

Sunset Homes Sold in January*

Address	Bed	Bath	Sq. Ft.	Price
1915 Judah St.	2	1	1,190	$995,000
1678 41st Ave.	2	1	1,025	1,268,000
2206 Sloat Blvd.	2	2	1,703	1,300,000
1647 33rd Ave.	3	2	1,996	1,335,000
2044 Kirkham St.	3	2	1,892	1,400,000
2262 20th Ave.	4	2	2,043	1,450,000
2055 23rd Ave.	3	2	1,588	1,500,000
1223 12th Ave.	4	2	2,020	2,080,000
2443 23rd Ave.	4	4	2,003	2,188,000
1235 Fifth Ave.	5	2.5	2,673	3,100,000

**Partial listing. Source: M.L.S.*

Longtime Laguna Honda Hospital Residents Hang on Under Cloud of Relocation Uncertainty

By Judy Goddess

Left: Felipe Martinez has been living at Laguna Honda Hospital for the past 17 years. He's one of many resident patients hoping the hospital is able to correct problems that may force its closure. Above: Martinez's painting of Marilyn Monroe. *Photos by Judy Goddess.*

When 45-year-old Felipe Martinez suffered a massive stroke that left him unable to stand, walk, swallow or handle any of the activities of daily living, the one thing he was certain of was that Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center wasn't for him.

"That's for the elderly, that's not me," he thought at the time.

Now in his early 60s and after 17 years of intensive physical therapy as a resident patient there, he's regained some of those skills and his feelings about the hospital have changed. "I don't know what I will do if they close Laguna Honda down."

His worry is well-founded. Last spring, under pressure from federal regulators, Laguna Honda was forced to begin transferring patients to other facilities. At the time, the only available skilled nursing home beds were in Modesto or Watsonville, far from Martinez's family. "I'm scared. My family lives in San Francisco; they couldn't visit me. I'd be very lonely."

(After pleas from the city, the transfers were halted until February at the earliest.)

Meanwhile, Martinez is doing the best he can while the cloud of relocation hangs over him and the other residents.

An outgoing person, he enjoys visiting with friends he's made on the various units, although he misses some of the activities he enjoyed before the pandemic. The COVID-19 emergency forced the staff to close hospital-wide activities like field trips, bingo games, use of the physical therapy pool and weekly Mass. Some of those activities have been moved to the patient units, but it's not the same, patients say.

The popular art classes offered by Art with Elders, an outside nonprofit agency, have returned. Two works by Martinez – one of his hometown in Mexico and a more fanciful one of a tree full of wild goats – will be on display at the AWE exhibit on the first-floor galleries at City Hall from Feb. 2 through Aug. 25. His earlier portrait of Marilyn Monroe still hangs in the hospital.

In the interim, Martinez found other activities to occupy his time. A native Spanish speaker, he takes online English classes from City College of San Francisco and online computer classes from the San Francisco Community Living Campaign. When the weather is good, he visits the animals at the Laguna Honda farm, an oasis behind the main building that includes a flower and vegetable garden, a greenhouse, and a corral replete with a few goats, pigs, and chickens.

During his years at the hospital, he's become proficient in arranging paratransit rides and taking Muni to Stonestown, where he joins his family for meals. But he is still dependent on others for daily care and doesn't believe he could live on his own. And he worries what the future may hold. Will he be transferred outside the city to some less well-

Continued on page 7

Commentary

Quentin L. Kopp

Dollars and Sense

It has been a new year at City Hall where Supervisor Aaron Peskin from Telegraph Hill was elected president after 11 roll call votes by our district heroes, almost tying Congressman Kevin McCarthy of Bakersfield for roll call votes. This columnist wishes President Peskin two years of leadership achievement. My hero, U.S. President Harry Truman, once reminded Americans: "America was not built on fear. America was built on courage, imagination and all the unbeatable determination to do the job at hand."

The mendacity of some elected officials continues. Late last year after the November election, serious misuse of taxpayer money by Nate Albee, legislative assistant to San Francisco Assemblyman Matt Haney, was exposed. Before employment by the State of California, Albee was a paid lobbyist for Juul and a campaign consultant for various local ballot measures and candidates, including those supported by, and featuring, Haney. Thereafter, Albee received payment for political services from Honey Mahogany for Supervisor and No on B (a proposed S.F. Charter amendment) and thereby more than doubled his monthly state salary. As of Oct. 22, 2022, he had received $7,400 from the No on B campaign and $42,603 by loser Mahogany's supervisorial campaign, a total of $50,003. (Haney, naturally, publicly supported both losing campaigns!) Albee continues to solicit clients by means of his Albee Strategies website for political campaigns and "consulting" in violation of California Government Code Section 19990(b), prohibiting a state employee from working on a political campaign during working hours and Assembly rules barring conflicts of interest. Following a formal complaint by new Board President Peskin and the San Francisco Taxpayers Association, the Assembly Committee on Legislative Ethics is investigating the obvious legal violation.

Peskin also spearheaded garbage collection competition for the first time in San Francisco history, albeit only for city and county properties, of which there are many – like City Hall, Golden Gate Park, the Veterans Building, Davies Symphony Hall and Opera House. The low bid ($10 million per year) was from Allied Waste Industries, Inc., nee Republic Services, which, among others, collects Daly City garbage on a low-bid contract, having thwarted Recology's previous monopoly. Taxpayer savings will now occur.

Ratepayer savings for residential and commercial properties must also occur. Controller Ben Rosenfield's investigation of former Public Works Director Mohammed Nuru's corruption from 2017 until 2021 resulted in Recology, Inc.'s agreeing to reimburse ratepayers $23.4 million for more overcharges after paying ratepayers $94.5 million in 2021 for overcharges. Peskin and his colleagues must now enact an ordinance requiring competitive bidding for residential and commercial trash, plus recycling. Present rates have expired after five years and Rosenfield plays to promulgate and implement new rates this summer. A new ordinance empowering the controller to set rates or creating competitive bidding should occur. I trust Rosenfield. I don't trust elected officials who thirst for campaign contributions.

Last November, the Wall Street Journal noted the District of Columbia's next mayor might "be elected by votes from illegal immigrants." The City Council passed a bill authorizing any adult with 30 days of D.C. residency to vote. Thus, foreign college students in D.C. can vote this year, unless the Congress objects with a joint resolution of the Senate and House, which hasn't happened. One reader points out that D.C. license plates contain the slogan "End Taxation Without Representation," meaning D.C. Congressional representatives who can vote, adding that a Russian diplomat just posted to Washington won't pay U.S. taxes irrespective of his or her time in such post, thus resulting in representation without taxation instead of taxation without representation. Another advocates giving them "a chance" (to vote) observing they can't do worse than D.C. voters who elected a city council that enacted "such nonsense in the first place." I concur.

New York State's legislature gave unsuspecting taxpayers their own legislative Christmas gift last month, raising their annual salary 29% from $110,000 to $142,000. (Is inflation that high in the Empire State?) That's more than California legislators receive at $119,000, plus a per diem of $214 for each day of session. (The D.C. City Council again leads the nation at $152,813 and $210,000 for the chair. Our local legislators receive about $158,000 annually for leading the "City Family.")

Congratulation to the Examiner editorially for characterizing city government as "bloated" and "inefficient," comparing S.F. with 38,403 city employees, and total wages of $4,097,629,775 for our 842,754 residents to Los Angeles, with 65,261 city employees and $6,109,152,580 total wages for 3,819,538 residents. San Diego, with 1,374,790 residents employs just 12,305 employees, costing taxpayers $963,764,091 in wages. As of Jan. 1, however, Delaware raised its exemption from taxation on retirement and military pension income from $2,000 to $12,500 for those 60 and older, Rhode Island elevated its similar exemption from $15,000 to $20,000, and even Illinois increased its Child Tax Credit to 20% from 18% of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). When, if ever, will City Hall catch tax reduction fever from San Diego, L.A., Delaware, Rhode Island and Illinois. I guess "tax reduction" is not in the Progressives' playbook. That brings to mind an old observation concerning the difference between Democrats and Republicans: Democrat raise taxes and spend. Republicans cut taxes and spend.

Eight hours into his criminal trial, the defendant pled guilty. The trial judge asked: "Why didn't you do that at the beginning and save the court's time?" "Well," replied the defendant, "until I heard all the evidence, I thought I was innocent."

Quentin Kopp is a former San Francisco supervisor, state senator, member of the SF Ethics Commission and retired judge.

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Ombudsman Long-Term Care San Francisco
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

20th ANNIVERSARY

I started Jong Financial Management Consultancy on Jan. 1, 2003. I am a native San Franciscan, currently living in the Richmond but also have lived in the Sunset. We have property management clients in both districts. I love the outdoors, spending time in Golden Gate Park and on Ocean Beach. My background is in the financial services, technology, fintech, and proptech industries. Our firm specializes in cash management, fraud prevention, internal controls, software and systems implementations and employee recruitment; training. We help our clients complete corporate or back office projects, develop financial plans, improve processes, create application user manuals, and coordinate with regulatory agencies. For more information about our services, please contact me, Nancy Jong, at njong.jfmc@att.net or call 415-386-7463.

BIRDING FOR ADULTS, TEENAGERS AND KIDS

Heron's Head Park: Cargo Way and Jennings Street, Saturday, Feb. 11, 9:30 a.m.-noon. Trip Leader: Alan Hopkins. Meet at trailhead. Parking available – please do not leave valuables inside your car. Journals and checklists provided. Binoculars on loan. Leisurely walk through these magnificent wetlands. Bring pencils and binoculars if you have them. Volunteers with scopes accompany the walk. Rain cancels. Members: Adult ($10), Teenagers (free) Non-members: Adult ($15). For more info. contact info@sfnature.org.

Birding for Kids and their Families: Heron's Head Park, Cargo Way and Jennings Street, Saturday, Feb. 11, 9:30 a.m.-noon. Children 7 -12 must be accompanied by adult. Trip leaders rotate monthly. Members: Adult ($10), Non-members: Adult ($15). Children free. For more info. contact info@sfnature.org.

COMMENTARIES AND LETTERS

From the editor: All commentaries we publish are the opinions of the writers and should not be considered our editorial stance on issues. We strive to remain neutral and offer a balance of points of views. We invite readers who wish to express their opinions to send a letter to the editor to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Word limit for the newspaper is 350, for the website, 500. RichmondSunsetNews.com.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Felton Institute, a non-profit social services provider, has an opening for a community liaison: The part-time temporary position is with the Community Liaison Program, Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS). Job duties: Provide technical assistance by teaching basic computer skills on a smart device (smart phone, tablet or laptop). Skills include downloading and using the Zoom app, teaching Google Services, as well as navigating the internet to access resources helpful for daily living. Enjoy working with older adults and people with disabilities. Proficient in Cantonese and English. Send resume to Jobs@felton.org.

FELTON TECH SQUAD

Felton's Tech Squad is providing free basic tech support for older adults and people with disabilities in the Richmond and Sunset districts. Ask questions regarding how to navigate your smartphone, tablet or laptop. Drop in for a one-on-one session:

- Friday, Feb. 3, 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Richmond Library (351 Ninth Ave)
- Friday, Feb. 10, 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Anza Library (550 37th Ave./Geary Blvd.)
- Friday, Feb. 24, 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Ortega Library (3223 Ortega St.)

For more information, call 415-474-1558 or email techsquad@felton.org.

FREE FILM AT THE SUNSET BRANCH LIBRARY

A special screening of "Chinatown Rising," followed by a discussion with Joshua Chuck, producer and director, will take place on Saturday, Feb. 11 at 3 p.m. at the Sunset Branch Library, 1305 18th Ave. "Chinatown Rising" is a documentary film about the Asian-American movement from the perspective of the young residents on the front lines of their historic neighborhood in transition. Space is limited. Reservations are required: 415-355-2808. Free.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy February birthday to Oscar Alonso, Dave Bardfeld, Ezaad Bastani, Paul Bradlyn, Clara and Michelle, Darian Costa, Astrid and Doug Downen, Brendan Fox, Pamela Hirchak, Missy Keehan, Eloise Kelsey, Howard and Jason Michael Leigh, Roosevelt Lue, Peter Miller, Kelly Poole, Ryder Sanders, Santina Maria Sullivan, Kimberley Thompson, Courtney Wong and Edwina Yuan. *To add a name to the monthly birthday list, email Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Free.*

OUTER SUNSET FARMERS MARKET AND MERCANTILE

Join us at our weekly Outer Sunset Farmers Market and Mercantile, Sundays, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. on 37th Avenue at Ortega Street featuring local farmers, highly acclaimed food trucks/vendors, makers, merchants, artists and causes, plus live music, children's activities, yoga and Wednesday storytelling. Go to sunsetmercantilesf.com or call 415-465-2475 for more details.

PHOTOGRAPHER FOR HIRE

Tyrone Bartoli has been a professional photographer since 1995. He is available for a wide range of photo shoots. Call for a free consultation: 415-846-7838. Also, check out his Instagram page @tyronebartoli. Ask for the Sunset Beacon discount. Learn more at TyroneBartoli.com.

SALES REPRESENTATIVE WANTED

A commissioned sales position is available for a positive, friendly, outdoing sales representative for the Richmond Review and Sunset Beacon newspapers and the RichmondSunsetNews.com website. Great project for someone looking to earn some extra cash. Flexible schedule and no sales quotas. It is also a great way to meet people and learn more about our terrific neighborhoods. Plus, you will get to see your name in the newspapers in the staff box each month! Experience preferred, but not required. Email Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com.

SENIOR NEEDS A BENEFACTOR

I am a senior lady who needs a place to live at a private residence in the west area of San Francisco or Daly City. I have excellent references, am quiet, read a lot, am good company and live by Christian values. Call 415-561-9275 if you or someone you know can provide me a home.

STAMP COLLECTOR AND STAMP COLLECTIONS

Stamp collector is buying stamps and stamp collections. I am buying the "older stamps" from the 1800s to 1930. American Philatelic Society member since 1986. Pictures are appreciated. Call or text message 415-533-0761.

SUNSET BRANCH LIBRARY ACTIVITES

All activities are free. Sunset Branch Library, 1305 18th Ave.

- **Beginners Tai Chi** with Patrick Lau, Wednesdays, 2-3 p.m., starting Feb. 15. Tai Chi may help improve your overall health, fitness, balance, flexibility, coordination, and posture. Space is limited on the outdoor patio. First come, first served. Please note the program will be canceled if it rains.
- **Tutorial: iOS tablet/smartphone class** for seniors 60+ and adults with disabilities. Feb. 10, 1-2:30 p.m. Using their own tablet or smartphone, participants will learn about the following topics: user name, ID and passwords and their usage. This is a workshop presented by Self-Help for the Elderly. Instructor is fluent in Cantonese and Mandarin. Space is limited. Reservations required: 415-355-2808. Sign-ups start on the first of the month.
- **Presentation: Growing Orchids –** Tips for the San Francisco and Bay Area Climate. Saturday, Feb. 11, 11 a.m. Learn about cool, temperate and tropical zone orchids. Which type is good for you? Get to know cool growing orchids for San Francisco and the Coast such as masdevallia and cymbidiums as well as everyone's favorite indoor orchid – the phaelaenopsis. Discover how to successfully repot your orchid, water, feed and get them to rebloom and ways to deal with common pests and diseases. Presenter: master gardener Lisa Erdos. Space is limited. Reservations required: 415-355-2808.
- **Tutorial: Android tablet/smartphone class** for seniors 60+ and adults with disabilities. Feb. 24, 1-2:30 p.m. Using their own tablet or smartphone, participants will learn about the following topics: User Name, ID, passwords, and their usage. This is a workshop presented by Self-Help for the Elderly. Class language: Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin). Instructor is fluent in Cantonese and Mandarin. Space is limited. Reservations required: 415-355-2808. Sign-ups start on the first of the month.

WRITER LAUNCHES NEWSLETTER

Former Sunset Beacon writer Becky Lee recently launched a newsletter exploring the role that place plays in our lives – how it shapes the work we do, what we create and who we are. In 2021, Becky moved from the Outer Sunset to Gualala, a coastal community about three hours north of San Francisco. She writes about her own experiences moving to new places, living in huge cities and small towns, as well as her childhood and college years on the East Coast. https://madeinplace.substack.com/.

THANK YOU!

Sincere thanks to the Sunset Beacon readers who generously donated to the Nourish Your Neighborhood Newspaper campaign. Your contribution will help keep us financially healthy. To donate, please send a check to: Sunset Beacon, P.O. Box 16035, SF, CA, 94116 or send via PayPal to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Thank you!

Announcements: $1 per word, 20-word minimum. Share birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, births, obituaries, graduations, sports highlights, business accomplishments, retirements, college admissions, etc.

FREE: Add a name to the monthly birthday list or submit free community events at no charge.

FREE: There is no charge for occasional announcements for small businesses celebrating an anniversary or other significant milestone or event. Send announcement to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com.

Announcements will run in the Richmond Review and Sunset Beacon newspapers (36,000 copies) and on RichmondSunsetNews.com (more than 20,000 views per month). Ads must be pre-paid. Deadline: 20th of the month. Mail check to: P.O. Box 16035, S.F., CA 94116. Call 415-706-6428 or email editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com for more details.

Laguna Honda

Continued from page 5

equipped and staffed facility where he is unknown and distant from his family?

Biggest of its Kind

Laguna Honda Hospital and Rehabilitation Center has been a fixture in San Francisco since its founding in 1866 as an almshouse for the city's old and frail elderly. In 2010, after voters approved a bond measure to rebuild the aging hospital, a new, adjacent, 782-bed facility was constructed, making Laguna Honda the largest skilled nursing facility in California and one of the largest in the country.

As of press time, no decision was shared about the status of the hospital's closure. This story, originally published by San Francisco Senior Beat – sfseniorbeat.com – was reprinted with the permission of the author.

There are some interesting outside areas for patients to explore at Laguna Honda Hospital, including a farm behind the main building with flower and vegetable gardens and a corral with goats, pigs and chickens. ***Photo by Judy Goddess.***

For advertising rates call 415-706-6428

Assembly

Assemblymember Phil Ting

Lunar New Year Holiday Proposed

Gung Hay Fat Choy!

The Year of the Rabbit is here. I wish you and your family good health and prosperity.

I marked this occasion by introducing AB-264, a bill giving California's community colleges the flexibility to observe the Lunar New Year (LNY) as a state holiday without increasing the number of days schools are closed. They could, for example, combine Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays as one holiday and add LNY as another.

Hate incidents against the Asian American Pacific Islander community are still happening, and a Lunar New Year holiday would help foster greater cultural understanding. It gives students a time to reflect on the special significance of this celebration and to encourage acceptance. We're better as a society when we create opportunities for communities to learn about each other.

I give credit to City College of San Francisco Board of Trustee President Alan Wong who got other members to support a resolution last year, urging the state Legislature to amend the California Community College Education Code to allow the LNY observance.

Since Lunar New Year is the most widely observed holiday for families in California's Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, Wong says Asian and immigrant community college students at CCSF and other schools throughout the state have had to decide between going to class or celebrating with their parents and grandparents. He added that, at a time when the Asian community is still reeling from hate-motivated incidents, this is our opportunity to promote cultural understanding and support the Asian community.

AB-264 is great follow-up to AB-2596 by my colleague, Assemblymember Evan Low. His bill was enacted this year declaring Lunar New Year a state holiday for state employees. However, it does not apply to community college districts, and I'm happy to step up and answer the call. As a champion of steering more resources to AAPI communities, I know this designated holiday speaks volumes in saying we matter.

For those of us who have kids here in the San Francisco Unified School District, we know the district has observed the Lunar New Year as a holiday for decades. It makes sense to give community colleges the same latitude. According to the Pew Research Center, Asian Americans make up 17% of the state's population, the highest share outside of Hawaii.

Lingyi Li, an international student at City College and president of the school's Chinese Culture Club, would welcome a Lunar New Year holiday. She wants the time to reconnect with relatives in China, allowing her to reflect on her culture, history, and spend time calling and meeting with friends and family.

The hearings for AB-264 will begin in the spring. I will try my hardest to get it approved.

Meanwhile, I'd also like you to join me in celebrating the Lunar New Year. I will be participating the San Francisco Chinese New Year Parade again this year. It will be held Saturday, Feb. 4, at 5:15 p.m., starting at the corner of Market and Second streets. Then on Friday, Feb. 17, state leaders, including myself, will be hosting a celebration at our offices at 455 Golden Gate Ave., 2-4 p.m.

I hope to see you at both events!

Phil Ting represents the 19th Assembly District, which includes the west side of San Francisco along with the communities of Broadmoor, Colma and Daly City as well as part of South San Francisco. Find an archive of his columns at RichmondSunsetNews.com.

Police Blotter

Robbery: 2300 Block of Irving Street, Dec. 28, 4:01 p.m.

Officers responded to a report of three suspects conducting auto burglaries.

The suspects were observed breaking the windows of a vehicle before they robbed a victim at an ATM. The officers disabled the suspects' vehicle and detained the three juvenile suspects, despite their attempt to flee on foot.

The three suspects were arrested.

Robbery: 1800 Block of 19th Avenue, Dec. 29, 12:36 p.m.

Officers responded to the parking lot of a bank regarding a robbery.

The victim reported that they were sitting in their vehicle when the suspect suddenly approached and attempted to open the vehicle's door. The door was locked, and the suspect used a tool – believed by the victim to be the butt of a gun – to break the window. The suspect then reached in, took the victim's purse and immediately fled the area.

Assault: 1600 Block of 25th Avenue, Jan. 1, 5:06 a.m.

Officers responded to a report of an assault.

Responding officers made contact with the victim and a witness who said that they had been outside smoking when the suspect walked up to the victim and hit the victim's head with a metal object. The suspect then entered a vehicle and immediately fled the area.

Attempted Vehicle Burglary, Outstanding Warrant, Resisting Arrest: 3000 Block of Taraval Street, Jan. 3, 2:33 p.m.

Officers responded to a report of a vehicle burglary in progress.

The witness said the suspect was observed trying to break into a truck. The responding officer located the suspect and tried to detain them. The suspect resisted arrest and the use of pepper spray was deemed necessary.

Additional officers arrived on scene shortly afterward and the suspect was detained without further incident.

A computer check revealed an arrest warrant. The suspect was arrested.

Battery: 800 Block of Ulloa Street, Jan. 4, 1:38 a.m.

Officers responded to a report of a battery.

The victim said they were waiting for a bus when the suspect suddenly threw a plant at them and walked away.

Responding officers located and detained the suspect. After further investigation, the suspect was cited.

Battery: 19th Avenue and Ortega Street, Jan. 10, 2:43 p.m.

The victim, who was escorting students onto a school bus, told responding officers that the suspect attempted to block the victim and students from boarding.

After the victim and students boarded the bus, the suspect began to yell and curse. The victim responded to the cursing by saying that there were children on the bus. The suspect then punched the victim.

Officers detained the suspect. After further investigation, the suspect was cited.

Stolen Vehicle: 4600 Block of Irving Street, Jan. 16, 6:46 p.m.

The victim, an ambulance driver, told responding officers they believed they had locked the vehicle's doors but left the engine running. After attending to a patient, the victim discovered that the vehicle had been stolen.

Numerous police agencies responded to the incident but could not fully give chase due to public safety. The vehicle was later located in Oakland by the California Highway Patrol.

Carjacking: 24th Avenue and Kirkham Street, Jan. 21, 9:42 a.m.

The victim told officers that they had parked their vehicle and left the keys inside. The suspect then entered the vehicle and attempted to drive off but was stopped by the victim.

Responding officers located and detained the suspect. After further investigation, the suspect was arrested.

Assault, Vandalism: 40th Avenue and Judah Street, Jan. 23, 10:12 a.m.

Officers responded to a report of a passenger with a knife.

Muni employees, who had approached the suspect to check his fare, stated that the suspect responded by threatening the inspectors with a knife.

The suspect then followed the employees off the LRV, so the employees returned to the LRV and locked the doors. The suspect followed but failed to enter the LRV.

The suspect walked away after angrily banging on the doors and ripping off the window wipers.

Robbery: 3000 Block of Judah Street, Jan. 29, 6:57 p.m.

The victim told responding officers that they had been walking when three suspects approached and demanded the victim's property. The suspects then pinned the victim against a wall and punched them before taking the victim's property and fleeing.

Commentary

Nancy DeStefanis

Notes From a Progressive

As we leave behind the atmospheric rivers that have tormented California this winter, our hearts go out to all the Bay Area folks and those throughout the state who have been left stunned and throttled.

Going forward, I want to stress two things you can do to make our City more habitable.

First, stop taking single use food ware with your takeout order.

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed SB-54 on June 30, 2022, which will begin phasing out single-use plastics in California. How it works: The bill requires all packaging in California to be recyclable or compostable by 2032, cutting plastic packaging by 25% and requiring 65% of all single-use plastics to be recycled.

Currently, only 9% of the world's 6.3 billion metric tons of plastic waste is recycled. The remaining 91% accumulates in landfills or litters the environment, and most plastics take more than 400 years to break down. Because single-use plastics are so lightweight, they are easily carried by the wind to litter the ground or end up in open water, causing harm to birds and marine life. Learn more at nycfoodpolicy.org.

San Francisco has already banned single-use food ware! On June 1, 2022, AB-1276 was passed, mandating restaurants may only offer disposable food accessories upon customer request for takeout and delivery orders. This new single-use food ware bill means less waste for California restaurants. Under the law, single-use food ware accessories are defined as: utensils, chopsticks, condiment cups and packets, straws, stirrers, splash sticks, cocktail sticks, cup sleeves and lids. Condiments packets include single-use packets of ketchup, mustard, hot sauce, salsa, soy sauce, sugar and salt.

SF's Department of the Environment (SF Environment) works with restaurants through outreach and education so they can comply with the law. However, these single-use items continue to be included with take-out orders. Please insist on no single-use items when you order. Food delivery services must give you the option online to ask for utensils. If you don't opt for the utensils, they are forbidden from including with your food order. SF Environment is the agency responsible for compliance and outreach/education. One can provide information about a non-compliance with SF zero waste policies through the web at: https://tinyurl.com/569sv5kz.

Second, make San Francisco more accessible for people with disabilities.

Disability access complaints can be made by calling 311 or online here: sf.gov/report-building-problem.

Depending on the type of complaint, it will be assigned to appropriate staff for investigation.

Department of Building Inspection (DBI) is limited with the types of complaints they can enforce for various reasons, but are currently underway with their Accessible Business Entrance Program to help businesses become compliant with accessible entrance requirements.

Continued on page 10

Coyotes in SF

Continued from page 1

food, fallen fruit or garbage outside for coyotes, or their preferred prey, rodents, to eat.

Second, officials are educating the public that if they encounter a coyote, avoid it. Walk (don't run) away from the coyote – they are very territorial and are likely to be satisfied to see you leave. Note that although dogs and coyotes are relatives (or maybe because of this), they do not get along. Keep your dog on a leash, and walk away, picking up small dogs or dragging the larger ones, if necessary, to satisfy the coyote that you are leaving. The coyote may even follow you and your dog, "escorting" you out of its territory. Officials also advise "hazing" the coyote to scare it away. Hazing can include a range of unfriendly human behavior, from yelling and waving your arms to using whistles or throwing objects towards (not at) the coyote.

Third, park officials are placing signs or limiting access to areas where coyotes have been observed. Be sure not to walk your dog in an area cordoned off due to coyote "pupping" season. Coyotes aggressively defend their dens, especially if a dog is nearby.

Coyotes exhibiting aggressive behavior can also be trapped. California law prohibits them from being relocated, so this is a lethal option. In 2021, federal wildlife officials targeted and killed a coyote that was repeatedly charging toddlers in the Botanical Garden. Some cities routinely trap and kill coyotes. In San Francisco, killing coyotes is a measure of last resort, and only aggressive individuals are targeted.

According to Dr. Jonathon Young, an ecologist with the Presidio Trust, non-lethal strategies have proved successful in reducing conflicts in the Presidio.

Coyotes likely present a greater threat to our pets than to ourselves. In a three-year period, Culver City recorded that 83 cats were killed by coyotes. Dr. Niamh Quinn, a University of California scientist, conducted a study of coyotes' stomach contents in Southern California and found evidence that 35% of the coyotes tested had consumed some cat. No data was available on dogs because of the similarity between dog and coyote DNA. The logical solution is to keep cats indoors, keeping them safe from coyotes. Dogs should be kept on a leash. As a reminder, it is illegal to have a dog off leash in Golden Gate Park, except in specified dog play areas.

If you see a coyote behaving aggressively, report it to SF Animal Care and Control at 415-554-9400 or online at ACC@sfgov.org. Also, to add to coyote database observations, go to iNaturalist.org. Sightings in the Presidio should be reported to coyote@presidiotrust.org.

'Then and Now': Irving Street and Ninth Avenue

Above: The view looking south on Irving Street near Ninth Avenue, circa 1915, shows the Irish Tavern on the corner, Laguna Honda School and future UCSF in distance. The house in the center later moved to Funston Avenue. Notice there is only one car on the street. ***Photo courtesy of a private collector/Western Neighborhoods Project/OpenSFHistory.***

Right: The same view 108 year later shows how built up the neighborhood is – especially UCSF – and how the street looks without telephone poles and wires, but lots of cars. ***Photo by Michael Durand.***

Kilduff's Korner by Paul Kilduff

"Do you know 'Cry Me an Atmospheric River?'"

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City Hall

Supervisor Joel Engardio

A New Start at City Hall for D-4

There are lots of opinions about who a district supervisor should be, what ideologies they should support and which identities they should represent.

For example, I'm the first openly gay supervisor elected in a westside district. Some find that interesting because San Francisco's western neighborhoods have been historically conservative.

How much does it matter?

I knocked on the door of an 81-year-old woman who told me she is a lesbian. She has lived with her partner in their Sunset home for 50 years. She remembers when being LGBTQ meant shame, persecution and no hope of equal treatment. She knows transgender people still face terrible discrimination.

So, it's meaningful to her when the Board of Supervisors has more LGBTQ members. But she also wanted to know where I stood on the issues that affect her daily life. She grilled me on crime, traffic, education and homelessness.

Being gay was not the only reason to vote for me. I had to offer a larger vision for creating our best San Francisco. To win the election, a majority of voters needed to feel that my vision best matched their vision.

I believe we must focus on the basic ingredients for a healthy city: safe streets, good schools, affordable housing and vibrant small businesses.

Nothing else matters if residents don't feel safe. And our public schools need to attract families, not drive them away. Our City's future depends on being a more family-friendly city.

I recently visited the police station that serves the Sunset and met with officers one-on-one and in small groups for 10 hours. Our beat officers need to know their work is valued and that their supervisor supports them.

The Sunset saw a big increase in larceny theft last year. We need to make thieves know that they're not going to get away with it in San Francisco.

As supervisor, I can't control the schools. But I will do everything in my power to ensure families are getting what they need from our public schools. We need to fix the pain points that cause families to leave San Francisco – like a lack of advanced classes and not being able to attend your neighborhood school.

I support building more housing because I want the adult children of longtime residents to stay in San Francisco.

I also support small businesses. Let's give entrepreneurs the freedom to create the next big idea. It could be the one to save our local economy.

There is a lot to fix in San Francisco. But we are far from a dystopian city. There is much joy to be found and creating more joy is what motivates me to work on what needs fixing.

Sandra Jeong sent me a message describing herself as a 66-year-old, third-generation San Francisco native.

Here's what she said: "I hope that you will bring sanity and common sense back to our local government."

Thank you, Sandra, for your trust. I will be a supervisor for all Sunset residents. That includes the 49% who did not vote for me.

My job is to listen to your concerns. Whether it's a broken street light, a needed stop sign or a place for kids to skateboard.

My job is to work with you to make everyday neighborhood improvements, no matter where you stand on the citywide controversies.

And when it comes to the big stuff, my job is to work with my colleagues in good faith to find the compromises that get things done.

We must move forward as a city that values ordinary residents like Emil Tran, who sent me this message:

"Thank you for taking the time to listen to ordinary citizens like me. Residents of this district will no longer tolerate politicians who ignore our needs."

Thank you, Emil, for expressing your concern. I am here to represent you.

Joel Engardio is the District 4 representative on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. He can be reached at engardiostaff@sfgov.org.

Lake Merced

Continued from page 1

the project would remain the same, the environmental impact analysis concluded that no new measure would be required to mitigate the significant impacts identified in the project variant of the larger boathouse.

The current boathouse is located at 1 Harding Rd. and supports five rowing clubs. It was built in 1958 and is a two-level concrete structure with each level approximately 7,600 square feet. It is primarily used as a storage facility for boats and exercise equipment. About 93 boats are now stored in the boathouse.

Presently, five rowing clubs use it: the Dolphin Club, Pacific Rowing Club (PRC), Saint Ignatius High School, San Francisco Rowing Club and San Francisco State University.

District 7 Supervisor Myrna Melgar stated her support for the rowing clubs using the lake.

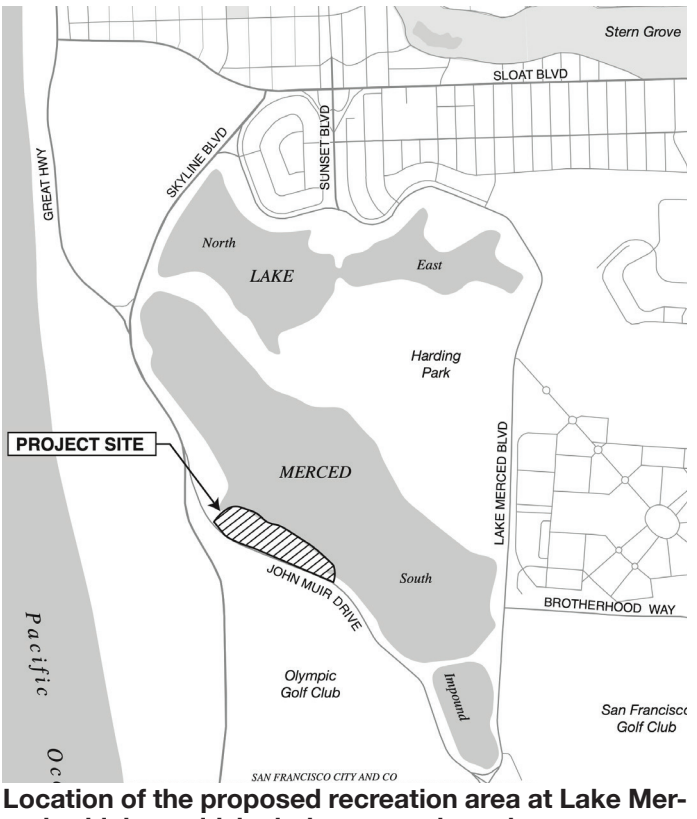
"The Pacific Rowing Club specifically has been a point of access for underserved youth to get into rowing, which has traditionally been an activity that has been more exclusive because of the expense, you know," Melgar said. "The current facilities are very neglected. And, in fact, a little bit dangerous.

"So, the opportunity to move things to the other side and to make them have the capacity to serve not just the needs that we currently have, but to grow access to the lake is really, really important."

Melgar wants to see a larger boat dock and space for more boating.

Others pushed for the larger boathouse facility.

"We would love to be able to provide for as many young people as possible, but at the moment, our current facility at 1 Harding Rd. limits our ability to do so," Maisy Ballantyne said. "(Rec. and Park) proposed plans for the southeast portion of the Lake Merced West site are inadequate and ignore the major activity at the lake, rowing.



Location of the proposed recreation area at Lake Merced which could include a new boat house, sports field and other new activity areas. *Courtesy graphic.*

"As Lake Merced is the largest lake in the city of San Francisco, it is so important for these plans to be site-specific, and cater to the activities on the water. Please direct (Rec. & Park) to promptly replace the plans being used by the EIR with ones that incorporate PRC's and SI's jointly created vision for the southeast portion of the site. Save taxpayer money and everyone's time by having the right plans in place the first time through."

There were quite a few people whose comments also supported a larger boathouse.

"The plans assessed in the EIR need to include a major boathouse with at least 14,000 square feet of boat storage space," said Robert Blazej. "A cornerstone of this effort is increasing access and engagement for people of color and traditionally underrepresented youth and adults…. The entirety of the southeast portion of Lake Merced West beyond the southern buildings should be committed to rowing-related facilities and operations, and not include arborist facilities.

"A boathouse depends on access to water, whereas an arborist facility does not," he said. "Include rowing professionals and rowing community leaders in the planning process for the rowing center area and let them lead or direct the layout and design of the boathouse and related facilities."

Dick Allen, a District 7 resident and a member of the Dolphin Club at Lake Merced, agreed.

"I strongly recommend that the Rec. and Park amend their EIR to include a new boathouse located on the site that is currently being proposed for a tree trimming facility," Allen said. "Rec. and Park's current proposal for this building on a waterfront site is a terrible mistake. The proposed site for a tree trimming facility is a perfect location for a new, larger boathouse for water recreation that will provide easy and safe access to the water.

"Rec. and Park needs to amend their EIR that would conform to the 2010 Watershed Report, a well-thought-out plan that took several years to prepare and cost $588,000."

Emily Koenig, the program director for the PRC, called for more than just a larger boathouse.

"I would like to request a modification to the Lake Merced Draft EIR of the addition of a much larger aquatic center to the lower southeast side, where the former skeet fields were located," Koenig said. "I think (the PRC) in particular really shares the same objectives as the project and believe that we can fulfill a great portion of them.

"I just want to get rowing into as many people's lives as possible because I think it's a very true and honest sport. And I think it can benefit anyone no matter where you come from or who you are."

DeStefanis

Continued from page 8

If you have any questions about that program, please visit sf.gov/accessible-business-entrance-abe-program or call 628-652-3724.

Around Town

One of our City's most precious landmarks – the Castro Theatre – is under siege! The Historic Preservation Committee is scheduled to meet on Feb. 1 to vote on the expansion of the historic designation to include the sloped floor and theater seating. Stay tuned.

Nancy DeStefanis is a member of the Richmond District Democratic Club, has been politically active in the Richmond and Sunset districts for 28 years and in San Francisco for more than 40 years.

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Zakzouk

Continued from page 1

a two-year program at the University of Wisconsin (UW) in Madison, with a degree in Art Communication, he was armed with magazines like Time and MAD, which the teenage Zakzouk devoured.

"I got hooked," he said. "English became a fascination, then an obsession. The seed was planted."

After high school, Zakzouk's father sent his eldest son to UW. After a couple of years, Zakzouk left college and headed to New York, which didn't work out either.

"I would learn something, get really good at it and then drop it because it would become boring and monotonous," he said. "I constantly needed new challenges."

It wasn't until he moved to San Francisco in 2007 that he found home.

"I started to see color for the first time," he said. "I fell in love with the City and the City loved me back."

Sunset District resident Zakzouk also met his wife of 11 years, Jessica Leaper, who is in the special education field in San Francisco.

Like many people, the stay-at-home father to daughter Judah Kai (Judah was named after the Sunset District street), 11, was going a little stir crazy with San Francisco's initial shelter-in-place response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. He so liked exploring the City and he couldn't really do that.

Pre-pandemic, he had painted a few murals and did some commissioned portraits. His wife encouraged him to "do something with your art." She bought him water colors, oils and chalk.

"I was creating a lot but I still wasn't satisfied," Zakzouk said.

One day he walked outside and began drawing with chalk in front of the house. Each day, the pieces got bigger and more complex.

"I started getting into geometry and sacred art," he said. "I wanted to communicate that and practice that."

To draw circles, he uses a Hula Hoop as a guide. Even though the drawings grew intricate, most take Zakzouk about an hour to complete.

Neighborhood passersby began to take notice and started conversations with him. Children in the neighborhood tried to figure out his Pac-Man style mazes. Sunset District merchants started inviting him to create works on the sidewalks at their storefronts, including Sam and Ghada Kaleh, owners of Lucca Food Deli and Wine Shop on Irving Street and 20th Avenue (established in 1927). They also commissioned Zakzouk to paint the exterior of the building.

"I updated it for the 21st century," he said.

Subject matter of the sidewalk drawings became more varied, to include animals and imagery inspired by current events, such as the war in Ukraine and human rights abuses in Iran. Zakzouk also had a response to the increase in violence toward the Asian American community.

"I drew big tigers and big dragons everywhere. I did massive Chinese art," he said.

Even though his chalk art is temporary, Zakzouk loves that his work can be seen by anyone.

"It might not culminate in an exhibition or a collection. That's not what art is to me," he said. "Art is a transcending process, a sacred process. It's about seeing or feeling something magical and sharing it."

Someone recently called Zakzouk "the Sunset's Banksy," a reference to inventive London-based street artist/activist Banksy, a major hero to Zakzouk.

"Art is for the masses," Zakzouk said. "That's what Banksy is about. He takes public space and makes a comment or feeling available to everyone. That's how you create change. It's the message, not the messenger."

Zakzouk considers this period of creating sidewalk chalk art to be life changing.

"If my wife hadn't bought me the chalk, I don't know what would have become of me," he said. "It made a 360-degree difference of who I am as an artist and as a person. I realized the purpose of art."

See more of Zakzouk's artwork on Facebook: facebook.com/khalid.zakzouk.

Artist Khalid (Kal) Zakzouk fell in love with San Francisco when he moved here in 2007. "I started to see color for the first time," he said. He grew up in Saudi Arabia. The only color he vividly remembers is the color of sand. *Photo by Noma Faingold.* Below and left: Zakzouk's creation of intricate geometric designs and sacred symbols "is about seeing something magical and sharing it." *Courtesy photos.*

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